IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-7.   (Canceled)

8.   (Currently amended) In an information distribution system including provider equipment and subscriber equipment, said provider equipment communicating to said subscriber equipment information streams including content requested by said subscriber equipment, an apparatus comprising:

a session manager, for interacting with said subscriber equipment and maintaining a plurality of playlists, wherein each playlist is associated with a respective subscriber, said playlist defining a plurality of content streams to be provided to said subscriber equipment, said playlist further identifying reverse and fast-forward streams associated with each one of said plurality of content streams, each content stream comprising a plurality of splicing entry and exit points dispersed therein to enable transitioning between said plurality of content streams, wherein said splicing entry and exit points are identified within transport packet headers of each one of said plurality of content streams;

a server, for storing content streams; and

a server controller for retrieving from said server, content streams defined by said playlist, said content streams being sequentially provided to said subscriber equipment; ~~and~~

said server controller, in response to a remaining portion of a current content stream being provided to said subscriber equipment being below a threshold, communicating a termination notification to said session manager;

said session manager, in response to said termination notification, communicating to said server controller an indication of a next content stream to be provided to said subscriber equipment;

said session manager modifying said playlist in response to playlist modification commands received from said subscriber equipment, wherein a next ~~content~~ stream in said playlist is spliced at an entry point associated with an exit point of a current ~~content~~ stream being ~~sent~~ provided to said subscriber equipment.

9.   (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein:

said modification commands comprise at least one of an add command, a delete command, a skip forward command, a skip backwards command, a fast forward command and a rewind command.

10.   (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein:

said session manager, in response to said add command and said delete command, respectively adding or deleting a subscriber-indicated content stream from said playlist.

11.   (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein:

said session manager, in response to said skip forward command and said skip backwards command, causing said server controller to begin providing to said subscriber equipment, respectively, a next content stream or a previous content stream within said playlist.

12.   (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein:

said session manager, in response to said fast forward command and said rewind command, causing said server controller to begin providing to said subscriber equipment, respectively, said fast forward stream or said fast rewind stream associated with a presently provided content stream

13-14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein said server comprises a plurality of servers, each of said plurality of servers storing at least a respective portion of the content streams available to a subscriber, said server controller causing a transport processor to receive a substantially continuous stream of content for each active subscriber regardless of the server presently storing that content.

16. (Currently amended) In an information distribution system including provider equipment and subscriber equipment, said provider equipment communicating content to said subscriber equipment via a distribution network, a provider method comprising the steps of:

establishing a session with a subscriber;

maintaining a plurality of playlists, wherein each one of said plurality of playlists is associated with a respective subscriber;

generating a playlist for said subscriber if a playlist does not presently exist, said playlist determining a sequence of content streams to be retrieved from a server and coupled to a transport processor for distribution to said subscriber via said distribution network, each content stream comprising a plurality of splicing entry and exit points dispersed therein to enable transitioning between content streams, wherein said splicing entry and exit points are identified within transport packet headers of each one of said content streams, said playlist further identifying reverse and fast-forward streams associated with said content streams;

in the case of said subscriber transmitting a playlist modification command, modifying said playlist at said provider equipment in response to said playlist modification command;

in the case of said subscriber transmitting a content stream modification command, modifying said content stream in response to said content stream modification command;

determining a next content stream to be provided to said subscriber equipment from said playlist, wherein determining said next content stream comprises:

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communicating a termination notification from a server controller to a session manager in response to a remaining portion of a current content stream being provided to said subscriber equipment being below a threshold; and

in response to said termination notification, communicating from said session manager to said server controller an indication of a next content stream to be provided to said subscriber equipment;

closing a present content stream being retrieved from a ~~sever~~ server and provided to said transport processor; and

~~communicating said next content stream to be provided to said server to a server controller, said server controller responsively~~ causing said next content stream to be provided to said transport processor upon the termination of the present content stream provided to said transport processor, wherein [[a]] said next content stream in said playlist is spliced at an entry point associated with an exit point of [[a]] said current content stream being ~~sent~~ provided to said subscriber equipment.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein:

said modification commands comprise at least one of an add command, a delete command, a skip forward command, a skip backwards command, a fast forward command and a rewind command.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17, further comprising the step of:

adding or deleting a subscriber-indicated content stream from said playlist in response to, respectively, said add command and said delete command.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of:

in response to said fast forward command and said rewind command, causing said server controller to begin providing to said subscriber equipment, respectively, said fast forward stream or said fast rewind stream associated with a presently provided content stream

20-21. (Canceled)